

## 2012 First Lady's Volunteer of the Year Awards Recipient Bios

**Marvin Hadenfeldt** has been volunteering in the Anchorage community for more than 25 years. During the day he serves as a special education aide at Gladys Wood Elementary School, where he is beloved by his students, and volunteers at an after-school program. He serves regularly at Mountain View Baptist Church and Sand Lake Baptist Church facilitating their music programs. The Adventure program and Kids for Christ program were also spearheaded under his leadership at these churches. Marvin also volunteers by singing and playing his guitar at the Providence Extended Care Center. Many Alaskans that have volunteered with him state that his life is defined by his efforts on behalf of others, and that he has continuously offered his time, talents, and energies for the betterment of his community.

**Jim Cedeno** is a driving force for change in Old Harbor, Alaska. As a Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO), Jim works to ensure the safety of children and the village, but his personal commitment goes much deeper than his job. Jim supports and encourages community events, such as the Fourth of July celebration and community dances. He brings training programs to the village for domestic violence prevention, first aid, CPR, and suicide prevention. Additionally, he wrote the Old Harbor oil spill response plan and is finishing a natural disaster response plan to make sure Old Harbor is prepared in the event of a disaster or emergency. As an Army Reservist, Jim is prepared to serve his country, and often facilitates military funerals and events honoring veterans. In the words of Jim's nominator, "[He] has been instrumental in reviving Old Harbor's spirit; we are filled with dreams and plans for the future again."

**Teisha Simmons** has dedicated her life to inspiring Interior Alaskans with her passion and determination for others. In addition to serving on many boards and committees, Teisha has taught rural human services at the University of Alaska Fairbanks and is now the director of the Interior/Aleutians Campus. She has worked to inspire others with her zest for life and passion to end the epidemic of suicide in rural Alaska. Whenever someone she knows is facing a death in the family, she directs her "Angel Team" to assist them. They raise money, cook meals, and support families going through difficult times. Teisha also opens her home and hosts beading sessions to help families prepare for burials and potlaches for their loved ones. She works tirelessly to support her community and keep the Native Alaskan culture alive in our youth.

**Tracy Golly** volunteers with Challenge Alaska in Girdwood to teach persons with physical, developmental, or emotional disabilities how to ski. He has taught ski lessons, run instructional clinics, and trained other volunteers to work with Challenge Alaska. Tracy has the gift to work intuitively and patiently with disabled persons to help them experience the therapeutic benefits of skiing. His dedication has personally impacted many families who have seen their loved ones enjoy skiing in a way that might not have been available to them were it not for Tracy. His devotion to instructing disabled persons has continued for more than 15 years. The impact of his generous efforts on disabled persons, their families, and the community is immeasurable.

**Donna Anthony** recognized needs in her community while on patrol as a Palmer Police Officer. More than ten years ago, she encountered seniors who were alone during the holidays and started the Santa Cop program to help any senior who does not have family or the resources to celebrate

Christmas. She recruited other law enforcement officers to assist her. They wrapped gifts, made hot meals, and delivered them all over the Palmer area. Eventually their efforts spread to include Wasilla, Willow, and Talkeetna, and with the help of the Mat-Su Valley Senior Center they can now meet a wide variety of needs. As the program grew, Officer Anthony directed fundraisers and worked with community partners to help seniors get the resources they needed, and expanded Santa Cop's services to include utility assistance, snow plowing, and other basic services. Donna's desire to make sure no one falls through the cracks has a tremendous effect on seniors and her community at large.

**Lisa Topping** works behind the scenes at the Ketchikan VFW. Her compassionate heart reaches out to people who are in the hospital or homebound. She and her husband Gene bring sandwiches, flowers, reading materials, and friendship to those who are unable to move about on their own. She brings cheer to her community with her smile. Families are also given a much needed break and are comforted knowing someone is staying with their family member while they are at work or running errands. Lisa is devoted to her country and to Alaska's servicemen and women. She can regularly be found decorating the VFW hall for events. With her loving attitude and caring heart, Lisa brings joy to Ketchikan families and her community.

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